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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1918.

The Seamy Rumor-Mongering of War.
The steamship Nieuw Amsterdam recently arrived in New York harbor from Rotterdam. She brought 1,506 passengers—many of them Americans and neutral refugees from Germany—and the biggest cargo of rumors that has been landed on these shores in many months.

Unfortunately, there is no censorship or anti-toxin against rumors. If there were, German propaganda would lose its chief poison. Here is a little of the stuff which the Nieuw Amsterdam passengers got through the New York customs office: Holland is expected to enter the war on the side of Germany next spring unless the United States and the allies supply her needs.

The great Krupp gun works in Essen, Germany, are being transferred underground to protect them from expected airplane raids by American and allied aviators.

Germany is planning an undersea campaign in the Pacific.

A fleet of giant submarines, each capable of carrying a 6-inch gun, is being constructed in Germany.

Desertions from the German army are increasing, many soldiers carrying children into Holland in a famished condition.

These things mainly are harmless enough, and will not hurt the credulous. None of them seems to be a "plant." The point is that a multitude of vagrant rumors are reaching the American people all the time, the great majority of which conduce to a confusion and blurring of the clean-cut issues of the war. Americans are unduly receptive, as a rule, to the whisperings of gossip and rumor in any given situation—"inside stuff," it is called. Any wild story which has the element of surprise and mystery in it is likely to be told and retold, gaining new curlicues in the telling, and unconsciously affecting and perverting the thinking of many thousands who are not sufficiently well-informed to resist its influence.

Rumor piled on rumor soon crowd facts out of the mind, weaken the power of judgment, weaken the capacity of the mind to see straight ahead or to keep to a given track. And it is safe to say that more rumors are being thrust upon Americans now than at any time in their history. They are printed as a matter of business, read with gusto, discussed pro and con by many folks who are only too anxious to escape the beaten track of the war—who are glad to plume themselves they have an "inside tip" that Germany is going to "crack" in a few months, or that Hindenburg is surely going to carry out his threat that he will reach Paris in April.

Secret Service men searched the Nieuw Amsterdam from keel to topmast for poisons, cultures, germs of all sorts, before the passengers were let off—and indeed one newspaper printed a story that a certain strange fungus which would destroy the entire American wheat crop if "permitted to land," was found. Too bad they couldn't have declared quarantine laws against rumors. Not, indeed, that the passengers on the vessel sinned any more in this respect than hundreds and thousands have before them. It is difficult to keep people from talking, or cables from carrying all sorts of "dope," for that matter. From Rotterdam, Zurich, Stockholm, Bern, Madrid, and a score of other neutral points the stories come, some wild and some not so wild, even plausible at times. They are dangerous in exact relation to their plausibility. Not that all of them are "fakes"—doubtless the first inklings of impending big moves in the war will come from these same discharging points and clearing houses of international rumor-mongering. For that reason we can afford to tolerate them.

Safety and Sanity.
Why not a safe and sane St. Valentine's Day? The sending of valentines is a pretty custom and one not without its benefits. There's remembrance in it and lots of us get into a rut and, to all intents and purposes, forget that there are others on earth. Father and mother are interested and amused by the mysterious movements of the kiddies in making and placing their secret missives. Cook gets a laugh, as she hears scurrying feet and giggles at the kitchen door and picks up a caricature that's enough to make her scorch next morning's toast on both sides, but doesn't. The lover is happy in buying a dainty bit of stationery for his girl, or in consuming the late hours in trying to make sixteen verses with something beside "dove" rhyming with "love" every other line. Even the staid old horny-headed editor chortles over a picture of a Missouri mule sitting at an editorial desk, with scissors and pastepot before him, for he hates to be ignored.

No sir, we're not against the valentine as an institution. There's human cheer in it. But—this St. Valentine's Day the railroads and mails will be in awful shape. The postoffice folks are working to the limit. War business, all sorts of business, is embarrassed by the taking off of regular trains. Let us conserve on valentine mail! Mail no valentines, save to our soldiers and sailor boys. We ought to remember them, with or without special occasion. And, what a fine valentine a sweater, or a helmet, or a pair of socks makes! It is safe to conserve the mail service for war purposes. It is sane to send as your valentine a useful article.

Prepare Now.
When the war is over our problems will not be solved easily. The first, boat load to arrive over a free sea will contain some of the thousands upon thousands who will be seeking new homes. We see war at such a distance that we scarcely realize that in Flanders and in Belgium alone there are a million homeless ones—torn from their fire-sides by a ruthless and pitiless enemy. Naturally,

many of these will seek other homes away from the scene of war's tragedies. We must be prepared to welcome these people to the land of the free and the home of the brave—but we must also safeguard those who came over before. Economic and social conditions will be severely strained unless we meet the issue squarely and fairly.

The Christian Science Monitor.
It is a natural and human wish to share all good things with our fellows. The right sort of a boy gives his comrade a bite of his apple. The unselfish motorist gives a lift to his less fortunate neighbor. The reader of a good book passes along the information that it is a good book, et cetera and et cetera.

The Herald is simply passing along a good thing when it tells of the excellence of the Christian Science Monitor as a daily newspaper. Its sane editorials, its selection of news and the typographically clear and uniform presentation of news, features and advertisements are such as to commend it to observing and critical readers.

Christian Science, whether you are of the faith or not, has run the gamut of derision and ridicule and indifference until it is today accepted as a guiding impulse in the lives of many of our best citizens. It is our belief that the Christian Science Monitor has done more to wear down opposition than any other agency.

Today with two Christian Science chaplains in the army and one just appointed for the navy by Secretary Daniels we are offered a concrete example of the liberality of the opinion of the day.

"Bring My Man Back to Me."
The London Daily Chronicle has been a stalwart in the great war—fighting the battles of the people at home, while the others are fighting our battles in the trenches. The annexed appeal is from that newspaper, and is so applicable to the conditions here that we have substituted the word "stamps" for "bonds." Read this:

Let your stamps help to bring my man back to me. For two long years he has been in the trenches. He is my husband—and he is living through hell—for me—for you.

Night after night I think of him. Often I wake in the cold, gray dawn—and think of him—standing to—watching with staring eyes (the dearest eyes in the world to me), for the long gray line of figures—the only enemy he ever knew.

Now and then no letter comes for two, three, four days. And I—well the letter has always come. And I clasp my little one to me with a heartache you may never know.

I know his chance of life depends upon the bullets, bombs and shells which your stamps buy; that each stamp you buy means better protection for him—for me. Is it too much for me to ask you to lend your money to your country at interest? Stamps save lives. Is it too much to ask you to lend your money on the safest security in the world?

Go to the postoffice or the bank; put your savings—all your money—at least every penny you can—into war savings stamps, and bring my man safely home again.

Need we add a line to this pathetic appeal?

Whisky is three times as high as it was a year ago. Good! The higher it is, the less it goes down.

A London cable says Trotzky is suspicious that Ambassador Dave Francis is a reactionary. Why the very idea! Dave Francis is one of the most progressive men America ever turned out—as progressive as Elihu Root, Henry Cabot Lodge or J. P. Morgan.

As an example of "industrial unrest" there's that copy of the Vorwarts, of Berlin, just reaching Amsterdam. It contains a declaration for the strikers, signed by its composers, pressmen and other employees, and a declaration against the strikers, signed by its editors. No sir, we don't know what had happened. We imagine, however, that one side or the other hanged the proofreader, at whose mercy all declarations of a newspaper really lie.

What's in a Name?
Strange names have often been given to post-offices in the United States, as everybody knows, but the wonder is that, after the humorists invent or use them, the more serious people do not paint them out. As a rule the names stick. The latest list shows a place called Ace in Missouri, an Affinity in West Virginia, a Barfoot in Georgia, a Bigfoot in Texas, a Blowout in Idaho, a Bragadocio in Missouri, a Chuckle in North Carolina, a Difficulty in Wyoming, and a Mud in Texas. The post-office doesn't care, of course, so long as the name is written legibly and the county and state are given. Yet one could hope slightly that the postoffice might care.—Christian Science Monitor.

The Knitters.
'Tis knitting! only knitting! That litters every chair! On sewing bags we're sitting, The click of needles, hear!

There windings, and unwindings, With tangles true and tough, There scraps, we leave for findings To mix with other stuff!

There's the blue, and gray, and khaki, Oh, yes, a thousand shades Of wool for every "jackie" And soldiers of all grades.

'Tis soft, and warm, and "fetching," 'Tis cosy, comfy, light; We dream 'em while we're stretching The yarns, for those who fight.

Aye, dream! we're mad with dreaming Some drunk! with dark despair, With mourning o'er war's seeming With missing those once near!

But stiffen back the soul-cry! Look up! above, beyond! And choke the truant heart-sigh Of flesh too overfond.

And knit, and knit, the faster, Each stitch a wordless song, Each twist and loop, the master Of melody so strong!

Knit in, with tears, with laughter, Weave in the garments weave, Love, that lives hereafter Forbidding us to grieve!

For love, the best, eternal, Demands the sacrifice Of life's springtime, so eternal In khaki's brave disguise.

So check the rebel tear-sign, "Lose not your stitch or 'grip,' But hear the victor's glad cry, And knit and knit and knit!"

ANNA O'C. PUGH.

THE WEAK PLACE IN THE LINE



A LINE O' CHEER EACH DAY O' THE YEAR.
By John Kendrick Bangs.
A CALL.
Is there sorrow on the earth? So much more for us to do, So much need for acts of worth To relieve the press or rue.

Is there wickedness afoot? So much louder comes the call To combat the hosts of loot That would hold our spirits thrall.

So be up and doing, friend, Join the Hosts of Loving Cheer Who would battle to the end For the rout of Doubt and Fear. (Copyright, 1918.)

—and it would not be at all out of the way for the Democrats, now in control of Congress, to make a similar provision for national banks. It may be added, for the information of some of the brethren, that the Democratic platform of 1908 declared specifically for guaranty of bank deposits.

Many States have made the effort to discard the system of junketing on the part of public officials, but the reform has thus far been limited to the States. Now there are indications that the new national party will look with favor upon such a proposal—to do away altogether with trips, here and there, by officials in the pay of Uncle Sam.

Of course, the practice cannot be generally inaugurated, but there is room for much curtailment and with it a tremendous saving in money. Campaigns galore have been held in the States and in the nation on the principle of economy, and the new party promises to revive the demand for care in the expenditure of public funds. How much it will appeal to the public no one seems to be willing to forecast, however.

Two matters of attention are to be reviewed by all State legislatures now in session and by many of the legislatures which are likely to meet in extraordinary session during the next three or four months.

One is the enactment of law under which all the soldiers of the State may vote on all offices to be filled at the fall election. The other is the enactment of legislation providing ways and means for only Americans to express themselves upon offices in American domain. In other words, with respect to the latter effort, the plan is to make it impossible for any of our alien enemies to vote—and maybe some of those of alien tendencies who, although made citizens of this country, still retain much of their love for their autocratic old mother country across the water.

Both matters will have attention, and both will be treated by undiluted solutions of Americanism. Nothing else will do justice to the THE OBSERVER.

A National Women's Prayer Battalion has been organized to get every woman with a son or relative in the army or navy to sign a covenant to join in a prayer meeting at least once every two weeks.

OPHELIA'S SLATE.
Those who have Prince Albert coats rattling around in the moth balls and most of us have, will be pleased to learn that they are to become as full-time whatever that may mean—again. Two officials of the new administration, known as classy dressers are wearing them. At a man's fashion show this week they are showing Prince Alberts. Two have been seen at the opera. And along Fifth avenue at parade time several of the Prince Alberts may be spotted.

It is argued that so many people have Prince Alberts yearning for use that it will save much cloth to revive them. But New York tailors are unanimous in the verdict that the Prince Albert is as dead as the dodo. An officer in the Medical Reserve Corps recently stated that he has found light and heat combined, alleviate pain better than heat alone. Hence he prefers an hot-water bottle and reflector to a hot-water bottle as a means of temporarily relieving suffering.

NEW YORK DAY BY DAY
New York, Feb. 8.—Most playwrights sit around in feverish anxiety until the morning papers arrive after the opening night of their new play, but Eugene Walter—who did not sleep on a park bench before selling a play despite reports—never reads the newspaper criticism of the efforts from his pen.

His latest play dealing with a family taint was a Pandora box of horrors, and it was pretty generally flayed, but Walter did not read a single review. He used to be a reporter himself and sometimes did dramatic reviews and he confesses now that he didn't know anything about the drama. "Perhaps that is what he thinks of a lot of other carping critics."

He got out of the habit of paying attention to what critics say a number of years ago. He was in an anteroom at the Metropolitan Opera House with several well-known music critics. They were all having a between-act "drag" at their cigarettes and one of the morning newspaper critics began to tell a funny story.

It was an old yarn and Walters was bored. About this time the strains of a tenor's voice floated into the room from the stage and Walter used the singing as an excuse to get away from the chestnut that was being spun. He also thought the tenor had a good voice.

"Pardon me," he said, "I want to go out and hear that fellow sing."

"Why waste time?" chorused several critics. "Every second blacksmith in Italy can sing as well."

Well to make a short story still shorter, the opera, Alda and a new tenor was being tried out. His name was Enrico Caruso. That is why dramatic criticism means nothing in his chubby young life. And furthermore, his new play, which the critics panned almost to a man is still chugging along and each week Walter rolls around in his limousine to sather in the fat but not cumbersome royalties.

A sweated, shivering bartender in a chilly, unlighted saloon suggested to one of his patrons on Heats Monday in the lobster belt, that the patron have a Garfield cocktail.

"Sure; shoot it over! Nothing makes me sick," said the patron. He got a glass of port.

"Why do you call that a Garfield cocktail?" he asked.

"Because it is dark, cold, and bitter," was the snappy rejoinder.

It was an Eighth avenue car. He was holding her hand in a desultory fashion, while looking across the way to read the headlines of a late pink paper. She looked pouty at his negligence, and he noticed it with a yawn.

"Gee, kid, I love you. I don't believe I could get along without you," she snapped. "You have all the passion of an infuriated clam. What do you think you're doing, asking the conductor for a transfer?"

And everybody laughed and the car rolled on and on.

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Army and Navy News
Best Service Column in the City

Brig. Gen. William J. Snow has been ordered to this city and assigned to duty with the General Staff. He will have charge of the distribution of trained artillerymen among new recruits and the utilization of artillery equipment. His position practically will be chief of field artillery. That title will not be given him, however, as no legal authority exists under present laws for such a position.

Gen. Snow was born in New York, December 16, 1868, and was appointed to the Military Academy at West Point from New Jersey in 1886. He is a graduate of both the artillery school and the Army War College, finishing at the former in 1898, and the latter in 1908.

Upon his graduation from the Military Academy in 1886 he was assigned to duty with the First Artillery. He was made a first lieutenant in 1898 and assigned to duty with the Seventh Artillery and made a captain in the Artillery Corps in 1901, a major in 1911, and a year later was made a colonel, and was promoted last year to his present rank.

Commendation for his conduct and efficiency has been expressed to Chief Gunner's Mate J. Agaz, of the navy, by the Navy Department. Agaz is in command of one of the armor guard units aboard the Colonel E. L. Drake, a merchant vessel plying between this country and Europe. W. C. Badger, master of the vessel, wrote to the department praising the work of the armor guard and the commendation from the department followed.

"The department has read with great pleasure a letter from W. C. Badger, expressing his appreciation of the assistance you rendered him as commander of the armor guard on that vessel. He states: 'During this time I have carefully observed his conduct and have always found it most praiseworthy. The discipline maintained by his men has always been of the highest, watches carefully kept, and when in the presence of enemy submarines, his actions were cool, deliberate, and efficient, his men at all times being well in hand.'"

"The department commends you for your conduct and the efficiency of the guard under your command, which reflects credit upon the United States Navy."

Lieut. Col. Douglas I. McKay, Ordnance, national army, who has been on duty here in the office of the chief of ordnance for some time, has been transferred to duty with the Ordnance Corps, General Staff for duty.

Maj. Gen. Clarence R. Edwards, commanding the Twenty-sixth division now in France, is suffering from an attack of the flu. The crisis has been passed, however, and Gen. Edwards is on the road to recovery. Gen. Edwards is well-known in Washington. He was stationed at the War Department here for some time.

While here he served as chief of the bureau of insular affairs with the rank of brigadier general. He was appointed to that post in June, 1906, and was reappointed in June, 1910. When war came with Germany he was placed in command of the Twenty-sixth division.

He was born in Ohio on New Year's Day, 1859. He went to the Military Academy from Ohio in 1879 and was assigned to duty as second lieutenant upon his graduation in 1882. He rose to a captain in 1898 and was holding this rank on duty with the Tenth Infantry when he was made chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs in 1906. He was commissioned brigadier general in the army two years after his reappointment as head of the bureau in 1910.

During the Spanish-American War he served with volunteer forces, reaching the brevet rank of lieutenant colonel in the Twenty-seventh United States Infantry. He was mustered out in July, 1901, and returned to his regular command.

First Lieut. Toby A. Greco, Medical Reserve Corps, has been dismissed from the army. He was court-martialed and found guilty of being absent without leave and sentenced to be dismissed. The War Department approved the sentence.

Lieut. Greco was regularly appointed in the Medical Reserve Corps and formerly accepted the appointment. He was ordered to this duty at the Walter Reed General Hospital.

Jokingly he was told that he was to be sent to France and to prepare for vaccination and antityphoid inoculation. On the pretext of going into another room he left the hospital and went to his home in Philadelphia.

Later he claimed he was not subject to military discipline because he had actually taken the oath of office. The Judge Advocate general ruled that Greco was subject to discipline.

Maj. W. S. Martin Dies.
Maj. William Swift Martin, Fourth United States Cavalry, died from pneumonia at Fort Travis, San Antonio, Tex., on Monday. He was born in this State February 4, 1874, a son of the late Capt. John W. Martin, U. S. A., and at the beginning of the war with Spain was appointed sergeant major in the Second New York Volunteer Infantry.

NAVY MAY OPERATE PHILADELPHIA CARS
Unless Better Facilities Are Provided for Workers, Action Is Threatened.

The Navy Department may commandeer Philadelphia street cars. This action will be taken if it proves necessary to the rapid transportation of workers to the navy yard in that city.

This was the impression gained at the department last night. Secretary Daniels declared the transportation situation in Philadelphia to be serious. Immediate steps designed to effect relief were determined upon following a conference with a large delegation of the Philadelphia workers.

Rear Admiral C. J. Peoples, assistant to the chief of the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, will be dispatched to Philadelphia to-day to take the matter up with the company officials and municipal authorities.

Secretary Daniels was told that many of the Philadelphia workmen have been forced to spend as much as five hours a day in transit between their homes and the navy yard.

It was said that it may be possible to stop the handlings of civilian passengers on certain lines while navy yard and munitions workers are being housed.

AMUSEMENTS.
NATIONAL. Tonight, 8:20. **POLLYANNA.** Next Week—Suits Now on Sale. **ALEXANDRA CARLISLE IN THE COUNTRY COUSIN.**

FEB. EDDY BROWN. Destined to be one of the greatest triumphs of the world.

SUNDAY EVE., FEB. 10—8:15. **MADAME MARIE RAPPOLD.** Prima Donna of the Metropolitan Opera House, N. Y. **MISS IRMA SAYDEL, Violinist.** Prices—Boxes, \$50.00; Orchestra, \$10.00 and \$15.00; Balcony, \$1.00 and \$1.50; Gallery, 50c. Seats on Sale at Knute Warehouse, 1221 G St., N. W. Under Direction of Arthur Green.

Florence Elfas. **MACBETH BRESKIN.** Soprano Violinist. **NATIONAL THEATRE.** THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 4:20. Prices, \$2.50, \$2, \$1.50, \$1. Tickets now on sale at Mrs. Green's office in Droop's, 13th and G.

PROCLAMATION. **BELASCO Tomorrow (Sunday) Night.** AND ALL WEEK, 3 MATS., WED., FRI., SAT. **GOOD CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON, ATTENTION!**

"OVER THE TOP" THE SHUBERT MUSICAL PRODUCTION. PLAYING THIS WEEK, WITH Ed. Wynn, Justine Johnston, Craig Campbell, Laurie & Bronson AND FIFTY OTHERS. THE MANAGEMENT TAKES PLEASURE IN ANNOUNCING THAT THIS ATTRACTION WILL REMAIN IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK. COMMENCING ON SUNDAY NIGHT. THE DEMAND FOR SEATS HAS BEEN SO GREAT THAT SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS HAD TO BE MADE TO EXTEND THE ENGAGEMENT ANOTHER WEEK.

"Over the Top"—Mat. Today

NEWMAN Traveltalks Color Views Motion Pictures **Once Only** **WEST INDIES** **Sun. at 3** **POPULAR PRICES, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.** **NOTE—There will be no lecture** **POPULAR PRICES, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.** **NOTE—There will be no lecture** **POPULAR PRICES, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.** **NOTE—There will be no lecture**

DOLLY'S Tonight, 8:15. **Pol Musical Comedy Players** 50 Singers, Dancers, Comedians. **A NIGHT FOR A DAY.** Prices, 25c, 50c, 75c, \$1.00. **Next Week—A Hawaiian Follies.**

B. F. KEITH'S 25c and 50c **"One of the Best"—Post** **Gus Edwards' Greatest** **ANNUAL SONGREVUE** **Lefroy, Tullin & Boese** **Joe Heather & Co. Six Others.** **Next Week—Gillian Elling.**

GAYETY Burlesque **De Luxe.** **"Follies of the Day"** **With Frank McKim, Gertrude Hayes and** **Clotilde Nelson in** **"OH, YOU SHAKESPEARES!"** **Next Week—Star and Garter Show**

MATS. STRAND EVES. 15c. **TODAY—LAST TIME.** **"The Price of a Good Time"** **With Mildred Harris and** **Kenneth Harlan.**

MATS. GARDEN EVES. 10c. **TODAY—LAST TIME.** **MAE MURRAY** in "FACE VALUE."

PLAZA 424 9th St. N. W. **TODAY ONLY.** **FRANCIS X. BUSHMAN** **AND BEVERLY BAYNE** in "Red, White and Blue Blood."

LOEW'S COLUMBIA **Morn., Aft., 8c, 10c, 15c, 25c, 50c.** **Continuous 10:30 A. M. to 11 P. M.** **LAST TIME TODAY** **MARY PICKFORD** in "STELLA MARIS"

ARCADE 14th and Park Road. **SELECT DANCING** **Wonderful Music** **Tonight—Week-end Dance**